



## Key References:

**Luke 9:23–26 (ESV)** – And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. <sup>25</sup> For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself? <sup>26</sup> For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

**1 Corinthians 6:19b–20 (ESV)** – You are not your own, <sup>20</sup> for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

**2 Corinthians 4:16–18 (ESV)** – So we do -not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. <sup>17</sup> For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, <sup>18</sup> as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

*“We can easily be tricked to making our life's goal the mere pleasure of our comfort... and we often end up turning God into this magical genie that's there to serve our flesh.” – Paul on Sunday*

**Hebrews 12:2–3 (ESV)** – looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. <sup>3</sup> Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.

Paul opened his message by talking about types of belief. Some people believe in aliens because they might exist in the universe. In the same way a lot of people say they “believe in God” because he might exist. **Why do people think they need to play-the-odds in this way?**

Paul said: “We don't just acknowledge that maybe he exists for us as believers. Our belief in Jesus is one that draws us into relationship, and it causes us to want to commit to live our lives for him.” **What's the difference between a “might-belief” and your belief in God?**

## 1 – DENY YOURSELF

Read Luke 9:23-26. In looking at what it means to deny ourselves Paul turned to 1 Corinthians 6:19b-20. **How does this scripture help us begin to understand Jesus' teaching?**

**What does it mean to deny yourself as a Christian? In what different ways did Jesus ask people in the gospels to deny themselves? What about the rest of the New Testament?**

Paul said: “Denying ourselves is choosing to live for Him rather than ourselves.” **How have you had to deny yourself in your walk with God? Why does biblical-fasting help us follow God?**

## 2 – TAKE UP YOUR CROSS

**Have you had to take up your cross in your walk so far following Jesus?**

**How would the disciples have interpreted this “take up your cross” teaching? What kind of lives did they end up living? Therefore, what should the 21<sup>st</sup> century understanding of “taking up your cross daily” be?**

**What was the purpose of the cross for Jesus? Therefore, what purpose should taking up our own crosses be for? What difficult / painful things in our lives are not things that fall under this teaching?**

## 3 – AND FOLLOW ME

**What did Luke 9:24 mean to the disciples? What happened to them? What about v25 and v26? How do these three verses challenge you? Read the quote from Paul on the left. What do you think about this?**

**How is this week's message challenging you to become more like Christ? If God wants us to become more like His Son Jesus, how can we seek help from him to this end?**